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Russia and the System of Transatlantic Security Perspectives for the Future

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Russia and the System of Transatlantic Security

Perspectives for the Future

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Introduction

Today many scholars argue whether contemporary world has become more secure and safer in comparison to the Cold War era. We may find many arguments in favor of one or another point of view on this issue, but one thing is doubtless: today's challenges and threats are more asymmetric in character and, consequently, require a more flexible attitude toward finding solutions and answers. The international security system, which was created in the middle of 20th Century, can hardly be applied to contemporary reality and calls for a serious revision of at least some key principles which have lost their relevance, if not a total modernization of whole arrangement. The need for of this has been coming for a long time. Such event like September 11th as well as terrorist attacks in Europe, Russia and the Middle East, war in Iraq and a political discourse about its inevitability and legitimacy underlined the urgency of required transformation. All these are just some examples, very striking though, of little compatibility between the existing world order and the new security threats. Ignoring this fact, in our opinion, may lead to even more dramatic and catastrophic consequences for the system of international security.

In the last several years the most sensitive tests and changes have occurred in the relations between the United States and European countries. The experience of joint missions on the Balkans, formation of the anti-terrorist coalition and debates over the war in Iraq highlighted that the Allies have different views on some issues of international security. The US and European policy in regard to other players in the international arena differs as well. Russia is not exclusion in this context. During a long period of the Cold War, the western approach toward communist Russia was not only unanimous, but also served as a “concrete basis” for transatlantic unity. However, since collapse of the Soviet Union the entire world witnessed the new Russia with new political approaches and priorities and the western countries were forced to find ways for dealing with Russia not as an adversary, but as a partner. There are many important and interesting questions being raised here. How is Russia building its contemporary relations with transatlantic allies? How does the transformation of transatlantic relations affect the Russian foreign policy? How have recent changes been reflected in Russian political behavior? What perspectives this process opens for Russia, United States and the European Union? An attempt to find the answers on these questions is clearly an ambitious goal of this paper.

1. Transatlantic split or steadfast alliance?

The clashes between transatlantic allies are not new. There are a number of historical examples, which clearly demonstrates serious disagreements between European countries and the United States in the past. Suez Crisis of 1956, Algeria and Vietnam wars in 50s and 60s, US bombing of Libya in 1986 and later NATO “out of area” operations in the 90s, when some Americans asked their NATO allies “to go out of area or out of business”, these are just several illustrations of serious discords between Europe and the United States. The nature of the difference of opinions, apparently, came from dissimilar perceptions of threat, which is forming on both sides of Atlantic. In many circumstances, the US saw European states as “free-riding appeasers” of states that threaten global US interests. On the other hand, there is the European perception of Americans as “simplistic crusaders who seek to assert their authority over their own allies”¹.

Looking at the transatlantic relations from the theoretical point of view, the realists, such as Robert Kagan, William Kristol and others, are inclined to consider the contemporary stage of transatlantic relations from a position when the comparison of the objective factors like military power, and the ability to project that power in the global scope is emphasized. A considerable gap between Europe and the United States in terms of military capabilities and financial resources influences the choice for the tools in foreign policy. The availability of strong armed forces and proper financial resources allows the United States to adopt an active course of foreign policy in which one of the central places occupied by military power. The US's readiness to act unilaterally irrespective of whether or not these actions will find support from other states has the same origins related to the military and economic preponderance. Following the logic of the Bush's administration, the use of force is presented as necessary, the most effective and, in some cases, the major instrument that provides sustainability not only for national but also for international security as a whole.

Certain American skepticism about multilateralism may be understood as a product of decades of practical experience of dealing with multilateral institutions and testing of their efficiency. It was the United States that stood at the creation of the United Nations and strongly protected its future principles at international conferences in Dumbarton Oaks (1944) and Yalta (1945), when there was strong skepticism about the viability of this institution. It was the United States that shaped multilateral pillars of the contemporary international economy by working out and implementing ideas that came into practice with the ratification of Bretton Woods agreements (1944) and the creation of International Monetary Fund and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development as well as followed construction of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and the World Trade Organization (WTO). And finally, devaluation of some multilateral principles, in their post World War II meanings, has become a result of years of gradual moving away from these ideas under pressure of changing the nature of contemporary threats.

Many representatives of the contemporary US administration are inclined to consider the perspectives of strategic choice from this very point of view. The attempts to tie the US Gulliver with hundreds of various kinds of limitations connected to international responsibilities, as

¹ Burwell F, Daalder I., *The United States and Europe in the Global Arena*, London: Macmillan, 1999, P. 110

Charles Krauthammer put it, does not have any excuse or rational basis². Moreover, these endeavors are dangerous. As admitted long ago, the multilateral world is the source of uncertainty and unexpectedness. Those efforts to flirt with the international institutions that were taken during Clinton's presidency led to the unavailability of the United States to meet such a shocking event as September the 11th. In this respect, according to realists, the US's choice in favor of unilateral actions and reviewing not only its military doctrine but also its entire foreign policy in the contemporary world – is obvious.

The changes followed immediately. In January 2002, Donald Rumsfeld outlined the key goals for transformation of the US armed forces and the stress was put on the "protection of the US homeland and bases overseas, on the projection and sustaining of power in distant theaters, and on denying enemies sanctuary making sure they know no corner of the world that is remote enough, no mountain high enough, no cave or bunker deep enough, no SUV fast enough, to protect them from the US's reach³. Some Europeans then became concerned about the idea of "network-centric warfare", claiming that Europe would become more dependent on the United States since Washington would be the sole holder of the "keys" of the "system of systems" which is the essence of "network-centric warfare"⁴. The next step was made on a doctrinal level, when, in his State of the Union address, the US President, George W. Bush expressed his views about the "Axis of Evil". Following National Security Strategy outlined the tactic of preemptive strikes. Meanwhile, Europeans were watching this process, and their attempts to underline that those recent changes in the US strategy might have broader implications were drained in the sea of anti-terrorist warfare. The culminating point for these debates has become US-led campaign in Iraq, against the regime of Saddam Hussein.

Europeans, who have much fewer opportunities in the military field, prefer to use political and diplomatic leverage to solve the international problems. Realists explain their objective to act in frames of the international organizations and their adherence for the multilateralism in the decision-making process, by the lack of capability as well as political will to use the same instruments as the United States does. This is the reason for some European irritation caused by the US's disparaging attitude towards the UN. This is considered in Europe as an attempt to review the legal and moral principles of international politics, as a specific reconstruction of the world order. Europeans consider such actions as very dangerous and as undermining the basis of the international relations. The motto proclaimed by Donald Rumsfeld, – 'mission defines coalition' became a symbol of the new approach to fight the most pressing security threats. Thus, the only possible way of assuring international stability is suggested by Charles Krauthammer in his theory of 'democratic globalism'.⁵ This kind of approach is the only effective long-term solution in fighting such asymmetric threats like extremism and terrorism. From this prospective, the best strategy is a promotion of democracy using a military force in the key points of the world 'where it counts', which may become peculiar democratic outposts for the entire region

² Krauthammer, Charles The Unipolar Moment Revisited, *The National Interest* Issue 70. Winter 2002/03 pp. 10-12.;

³ Secretary Rumsfeld Speaks on "21st Century" Transformation of the US Armed Forces [Remarks as Prepared for Delivery] URL: <http://www.defenselink.mil/speeches/2002/s20020131-secdef2.html>

⁴ Yves Boyer , Burkard Schmitt 'Can and Should Europe Bridge the Capabilities Gap?' *NATO Review*, Fall 2002. URL: <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2002/issue3/english/debate.html>

⁵ Krauthammer, Charles Democratic Realism. An American Policy for a Unipolar World Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 2004, pp.13-17.; Krauthammer, Charles in Defence of Democratic Realism, *The National Interest*, Fall 2004, pp.15-25.

and where it represents the greater strategic importance. According to the opinion of the defenders of such an attitude, the US's allies in Europe must take the existing order of things as it is and support the United States in its striving for making the world safer. This is exactly what Kagan describes. He argues that the possibility for Europeans to live in the postmodern world is guaranteed by US power, which considers the existing order as the constant necessity to struggle with the evil of Hobbesian reality. As George W. Bush put it, "There can be no neutrality between justice and cruelty, between the innocent and the guilty. We are in a conflict between good and evil, and America will call evil by its name"⁶.

Having in mind such an attitude, the development of transatlantic relations looks unpleasant. The disparity in the capabilities and readiness to use force in the foreseeable future unlikely to be decreased; on the contrary, the gap between Europe and the US has a great chance to become even deeper. Consequently, the mutual disappointment and suspicion will grow, and weaker Europe will strive to seek the opportunity to limit the US influence in the world by balancing with other centers of world power. This would be considered by the United States as a sign of strategic competition. It will demand even greater mobilization of efforts to maintain their dominance on the global scene. They consider it as something blending with the criteria of their national interests. From this point of view the consequence of such a tendency will be the intensification of the United States' efforts to divide Europe into competing camps aiming at assurance of the US predominance on the European continent. This in some extent may be seen nowadays, and, according to Christopher Layne's claim, this kind of attitude towards Western Europe laid the basis of the American policy during the whole 20th Century.⁷

The examination of transatlantic relations from the realist's point of view of realism, according to liberals' opinion, has a number of drawbacks and the supporters of this approach, particularly in the US, become hostages of the limited opportunities available using this kind of approach. The main postulates suggested by the realists may become a reason for greater divergence between the allies on both sides of the Atlantic. As Francis Fukuyama asserts, the United States does not trust other countries that potentially may become its global competitors, for instance China, Russia, etc. At the same time, the United States expects other countries to trust US policy, claiming that they use their preponderant power not only to protect the US national interests, but also those of other countries.⁸

From the standpoint of liberal theory the clashes between Europe and America are mainly on the military and strategic level. Such things like basic democratic values, political culture these fundamental values accepted by all the allies. Despite the differences in attitudes toward the question of the use of force, the basic values of Europeans and Americans in fact are not very much different when one speaks about democracy, human rights, etc. This became the basis for the transatlantic partnership during the Cold War and there are no sign that today's Europe and America diverse in their perception of these values. As for the questions of power, military force and sovereignty, according to liberals, the disagreements remain but they are not fundamental

⁶ Remarks by the President at 2002 Graduation Exercise of the United States Military Academy West Point, New York <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2002/06/20020601-3.html>

⁷ Christopher Layne, 'America as European Hegemon' *The National Interest*, Summer 2003, pp. 17-23; see also Gerard Baker, 'Does the US Have a European Policy?' *The National Interest*, Winter 2003/04, pp. 37-42.

⁸ Francis Fukuyama, 'The Neoconservative Moment' *The National Interest*, Summer 2004, p. 62.

enough, they are rather temporary and mostly connected to the search for new ways of collaboration in the changing world.

Another important aspect that will strengthen the unity of the transatlantic union is strong interdependence that will become even stronger in the course of further globalization. This includes not only the economical aspects like mutual investments, increasing influence of transnational corporations, but also deep cultural and social ties, which were formed during the 20th century and continue to play a serious role today⁹. Common threats and challenges are factors that argue for strong transatlantic unity. Most of the European and American politicians and experts agree upon the opinion that neither the US nor Europe are able alone to cope with the challenges which the contemporary world comes up with, e.g. terrorism or stabilization of the Middle East. In Zbigniew Brzezinski's opinion, there is no alternative for the US strategic partnership with Europe aimed at provision and maintenance of global stability.¹⁰ Every other possible strategic union with Turkey, Russia, India or Israel has too many weak sides and will hardly give the expected result in comparison to the full-fledged cooperation with European Union.

Besides the contemporary political conjuncture, we should not forget a 'personal' factor in the international politics. It is well known that the policy, which is held by Bush's Republican administration, is supported by approximately one half of American population. A possible victory of the Democratic Party in 2008 may change fundamentally the tone of dialogue between Europe and America on wide range of issues, including the problems regarding multilateralism and international authority of such organizations like UN and NATO. At the same time, pro-US oriented people may replace contemporary European leaders who actively criticize Americans.¹¹ Altogether these factors could introduce considerable changes in the transatlantic dialogue particularly concerning security and foreign policy.

In other words, from the point of view of liberal theory, in relations between Europe and America, one may establish that there are undoubtedly many more elements testifying in favor of rapprochement or even the unity of transatlantic allies than inevitable problems. There is a clear understanding between the allies that the sides will lose much more if they fail to stand together in promotion of common interests and values and that they will win much more if they are able to arrange close interaction and cooperation.

Despite this, the majority of factors point out the fact that consideration of transatlantic relations exclusively from the point of view of liberal theory or from the realist position does not reflect the full, much more complicated picture of the perspectives for the transatlantic security system. In connection to this, the most probable scenario seems that which will combine the traits of both realism and liberalism. There are a considerable number of arguments which force us to agree with this thesis. On one hand, there are many signs at this moment which show that the US dominance, especially in terms of military power, will remain in the years ahead. The administration of President Bush recently has increased defense spending by more than one-third – the largest increase in a generation. At the same time Europe can hardly increase its spending

⁹ Paul Kennedy, 'Three scenarios for transatlantic relations', *Russia in Global Affairs*, no. 1, 2004 p. 14-15; see also Pozen, Robert 'Mind the Gap', *Foreign Affairs* Mar/Apr 2005, Vol. 84 Issue 2, p.8.

¹⁰ Brzezinski, Zbigniew 'Hegemonic Quicksand'. *The National Interest* Winter 2003/04, pp.5-16.

¹¹ Gordon, Philip 'Bridging the Atlantic Divide' *Foreign Affairs* Jan/Feb 2003, Vol. 82 Issue 1, P.75.

on the defense in the nearest future. Moreover, many Europeans suppose that at this moment the increase of expenses on defense aimed at the immediate decrease of the gap between European and American capabilities in the military sphere is not only difficult from the economical point of view, but also counterproductive from the point of view of practical necessity.¹² Thus preserving disparity between Europe and the US will influence the character of the interactions and sustain the differences in foreign policy of the countries on both sides of the Atlantic. "When it comes to setting national priorities, determining threats, defining challenges, the United States and Europe have parted ways", Robert Kagan argues. Some cases connected to the war in Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Iran serve only to confirm this thesis. The same opinion expressed by Richard Harvey and Robert Cooper that when it comes to security and the use of force, every state pursues only its own interests, also fits into this conclusion.¹³

With all this going on, both Europe and the United States understand the fact that the model of further cooperation will be defined by notions like "division of labor" and mutual interdependence. On one hand, the fact that the long-term American primacy is far from being obvious testifies in favor of this approach. Terrorist attacks in New York in 2001 demonstrated that it is impossible to assure the national security of the United States relying only on the military power. As it is pointed out in the US Defense Strategy, in the conditions when 'Our [the US's] capacity to address global security challenges alone will be insufficient; some allies and partners will decide not to act with us or will lack the capacity to act with us; Our leading position in world affairs will continue to breed unease, a degree of resentment, and resistance'.¹⁴ Thus, the US needs to pay greater attention to the sustaining of mutual understanding and close cooperation with key allies in Europe. On the other hand, European interest in strengthening of the alliance with the United States will hardly become weaker due to necessity for keeping of common readiness to fight with more and more complex challenges and threats to contemporary international security. While many European countries maintain force structures that are simply not up to the new security challenges, the majority of observers have an opinion that at this moment there are very few indications that strong interest in maintenance of partnerships between the allies will change in the foreseeable future. This is why the European willingness to strengthen the transatlantic ties will be preserved on a quite high level as well.

As clear evidence of this we may find recent events that have occurred in relations between European and American Allies. In February 2005 US President George W. Bush undertook what may be one of his longest and most significant tours through Europe since the beginning of his presidency. Many experts have remarked on the importance of this visit. The message that has been sent by this move was clear: policy makers in Bush's administration think it is time to strengthen the transatlantic partnership, which has been seriously damaged since the beginning of the Iraqi war. In a recent speech delivered in Brussels George Bush demonstrated an apparent commitment to restoration and sustaining of the transatlantic alliance. Outlining the most pressing problems the world is facing today, he not only called for a new era of transatlantic unity, but also asked to raise transatlantic sights to the wider world and transatlantic ideals.

¹² Yves Boyer , Burkard Schmitt' Can and should Europe bridge the capabilities gap?" *NATO Review*. Fall 2002.
URL: <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2002/issue3/english/debate.html>

¹³ Harvey R. *Global Disorder*. London: Constable, 2003. P. 74; Cooper R. *The Breaking of Nations. Order and Chaos in the Twenty-First Century*. London: Atlantic Books, 2003. P. 150-151.

¹⁴ The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America.

http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/dod/nds-usa_mar2005.htm

President Bush also stressed shared interests and common goals of the allies: "by bringing progress and hope to nations in need, we can improve many lives, lift up failing states, and remove the causes and sanctuaries of terror", Bush said.¹⁵ In other words, the exchange of the official statements demonstrates the intent of European and American leaders to continue building the architecture of the transatlantic cooperation and the readiness to sustain the transatlantic alliance.

However, the transition from declarations to practical solutions may turn out to be far more difficult. It is obviously not enough for the US to obtain from this European trip just a rostrum for expression of its adherence to the common ideals. In this case Washington expects more active practical support from the European side (especially Germany and France) on the questions of stabilization of the Middle East. Some experts agree, however, that even before the visit it was clear for the US administration that there are unlikely to be any serious breakthroughs in these issues. This European tour had to demonstrate to the world an example of cooperation and ability for two sides which have different interests to come to an agreement. It also had to play in favor of the international image of the United States. Nonetheless, it would be a mistake to expect the serious changes of the American policy towards European countries during the second term of Bush's presidency.

As for the European countries, many see just one purpose for Bush's trip: he wants and needs their help on a variety of international issues. Some British, French and German diplomatic sources say France and Germany believe Washington is badly overextended and needs them for security, economic and political reasons. For the most part, European countries like France and Germany have national interests, which diverge from those of the United States. They disagree on how to handle Iraq, Iran, North Korea and China because each side has a different-sized stake in the outcome. France and Germany simply are not willing to follow the path suggested by Washington. The perception that Washington needs them increases the amount of influence they think they have. However the degree of the US interest in their support is far from being as high as it may seem from Berlin or Paris. In fact, the contemporary position of the US allows it to choose the extent of rapprochement and move apart from its allies with flexibility. Despite this, the US is not going to put the transatlantic union in danger and is trying to demonstrate the United States' readiness to improve the dialogue.

Thus, in present circumstances it is too early to speak about prospects of complete rapprochement or of the final break up between Europe and the US. The more probable scenario may be characterized as a strategic dissonance. Some tendencies for disagreement on several strategic issues, which have become obvious during the past several years, will remain alongside with strong tendencies of mutual support and cooperation. In accordance with the expert's opinion, the strategic dissonance will be rather the strong side of the system of Euro-Atlantic security than the weak one. The difference in the attitudes to the strategy of the international policy which exist in Europe and the US could be helpful in overcoming the drawbacks and weak sides in the allies' policy.

In other words, the character of the relations will depend on the liberal or realist attitude which will be chosen by the US and European leaders as the dominating one in the foreign policy.

¹⁵ President George Bush Discusses American and European Alliance in Belgium.
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/02/20050221.html>.

While the pure realism or liberalism both have its advantages and the weak sides that is why it could hardly be chosen as a strict guiding-line for foreign policy of any country. Possible alternatives such as “democratic realism”, which Krauthammer¹⁶ speaks about, or “liberal realism”, introduced by John Ikenberry and Charles Kupchan¹⁷ may well become a basis for the transatlantic relations for the near future.

As for Russia, its reaction and correspondingly its policy will be mainly dependent on the character of the interactions between the allies and will be at finding the appropriate place within the changing system of transatlantic security. The majority of representatives of the Russian ruling elite and society are sure that the only correct choice for Russia is to strengthen its strategic partnership with the West. Taking this into consideration, the most serious question that appears before the Russian decision-makers is how to accommodate the foreign policy to the changing state of international affairs. Each scenario of development of transatlantic cooperation described above will require Russia to correct its foreign policy course and adapt to new conditions. However, before we consider the prospective changes in Russian policy in the framework of the suggested scenarios in the context of realist, liberal or constructivist theory, it is necessary, in our opinion, to outline the extent to which today's Russia is integrated in the transatlantic security arrangements and what positions it holds within the institutions that constitute its structure.

¹⁶ Charles Krauthammer, ‘Democratic Realism’. *An American Policy for a Unipolar World*. Washington, D.C.: AEI Press, 2004.

¹⁷ John Ikenberry and Charles Kuphan, ‘Liberal Realism’, *The National Interest*; Fall 2004, pp. 38-49.

2. The current state of Russian involvement

What kind of place does Russia occupy within the system of transatlantic relations? It is obvious that the walls which divided Russia and the West during the Cold War Era now gone, but the answer to the question of what kind of relations have replaced the previous stage remains fuzzy. On the top level of Summits we can find many positive words about Russian relations with Western countries, but the overall picture does not seem so promising.

Some specialists think that the West has a more or less unanimous perception of Russia in terms of its democratic transition, economic reforms and political behavior¹⁸. Western support for Russian democratic reforms was accomplished predominantly on a multilateral basis via the IMF, World Bank and other international institutions and western unanimity grew from the fear that the loss of control over the situation in Russia would be a real threat to the whole international community¹⁹. But transatlantic relations and the recent “tensions” have added some new colors to the palette of the European and American approaches to Russia. Major divergences have become obvious.

Relations between the EU and Russia are very complicated and controversial. One of the major reasons for this is divergence among European states about foreign policy especially in the fields of European Security and Defense Policy (ESDP). Despite some optimists who bravely underline all the aspects where Europe presents real unanimity, for example on the question of Iran²⁰, there are a significant number of issues upon which the EU members cannot achieve a common strategy. Iraq clearly demonstrates this division.

In regard to Russia, the EU has not elaborated a common strategy. Big states like France, Germany, and the United Kingdom prefer to develop individual policy towards the Russian Federation, which does not necessarily corresponds to overall EU goals. Chirac and Schroeder prefer to avoid criticism of Moscow on Chechnya and human rights, Silvio Berlusconi praised Russian democracy and rule of law²¹, and Germany, France, Italy and even UK have their own reasons to achieve special relations with Putin. The opposite situation is developing in the European Council and the EU administration in Brussels, where special attention attached to problem of Chechnya and the Russian democratic transition. As for new members of the EU, many of them have had troublesome experiences in previous decades of relations with the Soviet Union, which makes it hard to see Russia as a close partner on security issues.

That is why a certain ambiguity exists among the Russian political elite on the question of developing close cooperation with the EU in the security field. The same ambiguity appears in Brussels. Consequently, Moscow constantly falls into the trap of a Soviet model of foreign policy behavior in trying to pursue closer relations with Europe to counterbalance US influence. The Kremlin greeted EU ESDP initiatives, hoping that it would diminish the importance of NATO. Russia's mid-term strategy of development relations with the EU in 2000-2010 stresses

¹⁸ Light, Margot *US and European Perspectives on Russia*, in John Peterson and Mark A. Pollack [eds.] Europe, America, Bush. Transatlantic Relations in the Twenty-First Century. New York: Routledge, 2003. P. 81-82.

¹⁹ Talbott, Strobe. *The Russia Hand: A memoir of Presidential Diplomacy*. N.Y.: Random House, 2002, p. 286.

²⁰ Charles Grant V rossiiskom voprose u ES net edinogo podhoda. Mockve stoit bolshe obchat'sya s bjurokratiei v Brussele [The EU has no unity in its attitude towards Russia. Moscow has to deal with Brussels' bureaucracy] *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* 23 June 2004.

²¹ ‘How to check Vladimir Putin’ *The Economist*. 3/13/2004, Vol. 370 Issue 8366. P. 17.

that cooperation between two parties will contribute to diminished “NATO-centrism in Europe”²². However, little progress in Russian support of these initiatives was achieved since the EU proclaimed that ESDP called for the strengthening rather than the devaluation of EU-NATO partnership.

All the efforts to widen the security cooperation, which was making its way through lack of strategy, misunderstanding, bureaucratic and political obstacles, were finally replaced with the very ambitious idea of four common spaces. The Russia-EU summit in St. Petersburg in 2003 approved the idea of creation of common economic space, common space of freedom, security and justice, space of cooperation in the field of external security and space of research and education, including cultural aspects. Nevertheless, having in mind previous experience of security cooperation, there was no illusion about immediate progress on the key areas, in particular, external security.

Several problems immediately became obvious. First, is the problem of decision making. There was no clear mechanism of how Russia being involved in EU-led operations would take part or influence on decision-making process since it is not a member of the EU²³. Another problem is a drastic difference in strategic goals between Russia and the EU; especially Russia’s seeking for dominance in the post-soviet space, which is met with little enthusiasm in Brussels. Finally, there are serious differences in Russian and European attitudes towards democratic values, basic rights and political culture²⁴. EU enlargement and the EU’s greater influence on former Soviet states as well as condemnation of Kremlin’s policies in regard to Georgia and Moldova also provoked a negative reaction in Moscow. Consequently perspectives of the creation of common space in the field of international security, as well as in all the other common spaces, were undermined by EU-Russia conflict over Ukraine and the *de facto* breakdown of the EU-Russia summit in The Hague in November 2004. This plainly demonstrates to Russia the priorities of the EU’s foreign policy and delays practical implementation of previously reached agreements.

Clearer progress was achieved, on the other hand, in NATO-Russian relations. After September 11th, NATO and Russian leaders had immediately realized the necessity of closer cooperation. Putin’s decision to join the anti-terrorist coalition energized the development of practical cooperation between the Alliance and Russia²⁵. Fortunately, it helped to move forward from the “declarative” partnership, which was established in the framework of the Russia-NATO Permanent Joint Council (PJC) after the signing of the Foundation Act in 1997²⁶.

During the 90s relations between Russia and NATO continued to remain under the influence of the previous decades of the Cold War and contained mutual suspicion. The created PJC continued to be a fragile structure with a very limited platform for practical cooperation. The

²² Russian Federation Middle term Strategy Towards the European Union [2000-2010] // *Diplomaticeskii Vestnik*. no. 11, 1999, P. 11.

²³ Tatiana Romanova and Natalia Zaslavskaya, ‘EU-Russia: Towards the Four Spaces’, *Baltic Defence Review*. no 12, Vol. 2, 2004. P. 94.

²⁴ Thomas Forsberg, ‘The EU-Russia Security Partnership: Why the opportunity was Missed’, *European Foreign Affairs Review*. no. 9, 2004. P. 261-2.

²⁵ Bosworth, Kara The Effects of 11 September on Russia-NATO Relations // *Perspectives on European politics & Society*. December 2002, Vol. 3 Issue 3, P. 361-388

²⁶ Dmitry Danilov, ‘Russia and European Security’, in Dov Lynch [ed.], ‘What Russia Sees’, *Chaillot Paper*, no. 74, January 2005, P. 81

crisis over Yugoslavia in 1999, connected to the NATO-led campaign without the resolution of the UNSC, clearly demonstrated of how fast the carefully built relations might be broken. It is worth meaning that Yugoslavian events still seriously influence Russian-NATO relations and are perceived by Russian public and decision-makers as an example that characterizes NATO very negatively. The selective approach that was chosen by NATO in evaluation of the policy of Milosevic, and at the same time inaction of NATO forces in the face of massive ethnic cleansing of Kosovo's Serbs by the victorious Albanians as well as bombing of civilian targets and infrastructure, still raises serious questions among Russian political and military elite. Only after Putin's elections to the Presidency did the process of rapprochement more dynamic.

The Rome Summit of 2002 and the creation of the NATO-Russia Council (NRC) under the chairmanship of the Secretary General have revived relations. Now, Russia is not simply receiving "precooked" decisions and feeling uncomfortable not having a single opportunity to take part in negotiations. Now, Russian representatives have begun to participate in discussions among other members of the Alliance. As George Robertson put it, underlining the improved quality of partnerships, "difference between "19+1" and "20" is not a question of mathematics, but one of chemistry"²⁷, indicating the significant positive qualitative shifts in practical cooperation between Russia and NATO.

In the NRC, practical spheres of cooperation include the struggle against terrorism; crisis management; non-proliferation, arms control and confidence-building measures; theatre missile defense; search and rescue at sea; military-to-military cooperation and defense reform; and civil emergency planning. New threats and challenges have added fresh impulse to developing of new agenda. It helped both Russia and the Alliance to take a new look on cooperation process. It was a good opportunity to elaborate common perceptions of new threats, especially in the field of counter-terrorism, which resulted in a series of unanimous declarations and resulted in the elaboration of the NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism, which includes a wide range of new initiatives²⁸.

Special attention has been given to the aspects of military-to-military cooperation. Despite serious difficulties and disagreements that occurred during joint operations in Bosnia and Kosovo, mutual suspicion and distrust have been successfully overcome. During the work of the NRC, parties made significant step forward in signing a number of agreements on issues such as search and rescue at sea, civil emergencies, exchange of intelligence information, etc. Several joint exercises such as "Kaliningrad 2004", "Avariya 2004" (a nuclear weapons accident response exercise that was held in Murmansk in 2004) were very highly evaluated by many experts and politicians. The Russian decision to take part in the NATO-led operation "Active Endeavor", which took place during the Istanbul Summit, confirmed Russian commitment to a common struggle against terror. Two Russian warships "Pytlivyi" and "Smetlivyi" are ready to go on duty in the Mediterranean.

The real breakthrough has been made in the elaboration of cooperative programs connected to Theatre Missile Defense (TMD). A recent one-week exercise "Collaborative Arrow 2005," was organized in the NRC framework and clearly demonstrated a rich potential for mutually

²⁷ Summit NATO-Russia Council [NRC] - 28 May 2002 <http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2002/0205-rome/rome-eng.pdf>

²⁸ NATO-Russia Action Plan on Terrorism <http://www.nato.int/docu/basictxt/b041209a-e.htm>

beneficial progress in this area. It also confirms the will of the Russian military to broaden cooperation with the Alliance. According to Gen. Yuri Baluevsky, Chief of General Staff, “the brains of the Army are voting for cooperation”²⁹. The same attitude is demonstrated in NATO. As Jamie Shea, Assistant Sec. General for External Relations put it, “in recent years, Russia and NATO achieved three significant goals: First, they set up institutional mechanisms for cooperation. There are two NATO missions currently at work in Russia, and Russia has missions both in NATO HQ and SHAPE. Second, they achieved a conceptual rapprochement and now we no longer consider each other as enemies. Third, they started collaboration in truly practical areas. They are working to achieve military compatibility, which is necessary for joint peacekeeping missions and for actions in many other fields³⁰.

Nonetheless, it is not possible for the time being to talk about absolute unanimity. Some serious contradictions still exist. First, there is NATO enlargement, which, according to Russian officials, does not contribute to the strengthening of security in the region³¹. The question of ratification of the adapted CFE Treaty also remains open and is used as leverage for pressure on Russia in connection to the withdrawal of its military bases from Georgia and Moldova. Possible membership in NATO by some former Soviet Republics is also disturbing Moscow in connection with the changing of the geo-strategic situation in the immediate proximity of Russian borders. The question of status of Russian military forces on the Black Sea region after all the declarations expressed by Georgian and Ukrainian government about their plans to join NATO arouses serious concern among Russian military experts³².

General ambivalence in the Russian perception of NATO is another issue which is hampering the progress of closer cooperation between Russia and the Alliance. A recent survey by the “Obschestvennoe Mnenie” Foundation shows that approximately one half of the Russian population has positive views on strengthening cooperation with NATO. This survey demonstrates, however, that anxiety about NATO activity has grown during the last 4 years. In 2001 the idea of strengthening of partnership was supported by 58% of the respondents; today it is about 51%. In 2002 only 20% thought that Russian interests differed from NATO’s; as of the end of 2004 this has increased to 25%. The percentage of those who think that NATO does not pose a threat to Russia decreased during the last two years from 31% to 26%. Specialists identify NATO enlargement as the main reason for these changes. In April 2004 after the last round of enlargement, 51% of Russians considered that the military threat to Russia has been magnified³³.

NATO, however, is disposed to continue to work to improve Russian perceptions. The question of increasing the number of NATO contact points in Russian regions is on the agenda. The Alliance is ready to establish small libraries in key educational institutions and universities in

²⁹ *Izvestia*, 3 March 2004.

³⁰ Jamie Shea U Rossii i NATO obschie problemy. [Russia and NATO have common challenges] *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* no. 39, 26 February 2005.

³¹ Speech by the Minister of Defense of the Russian Federation: “The questions of International security in the context of Russia-NATO relations”, on 40th International conference in Munich February 7, 2003. <http://www.mil.ru/articles/article4854.shtml>; *ITAR-TASS daily news*. April 6, 2004.

³² Mikhail Khodorenok Voennaya Programma Viktora Yuschenko [Military Program of Victor Yuschenko] // *Voenno-Promyshlenny Kur'er* 2005-01-19 <http://www.ebiblioteka.ru/sources/article.jsp?id=7268684>

³³ Dmitry Litovkin, Natalia Ritiani Putin Provel Granicu Nacional'noy Bezopasnosti [Putin have Drawn the Line of National Security] // *Izvestia* no. 15 2005-01-31 <http://www.ebiblioteka.ru/sources/article.jsp?id=7315244>; To review entire survey see: <http://bd.fom.ru/report/cat/frontier/blocks/NATO/tb041503>.

some Russian districts where the public will have access to essential NATO documents and security related publications. But this initiative meets a kind of quiet opposition from officials, who are concerned about the intensification of NATO activity inside Russia which undermines previous agreements³⁴.

Nonetheless, all of these problems do not weaken the general line of Russian commitment to partnership. During one of the most recent sessions of the Russian Security Council Vladimir Putin stressed that “the choice made in favor of dialogue and cooperation with NATO was the right one and has proved fruitful. This choice has clearly strengthened the Russian Federation’s international position and has given additional, in many ways new, opportunities for reaching our national objectives. In just a very short time we have taken a gigantic step from past confrontation to working together and from mutual accusations and stereotypes to creating modern instruments for cooperation such as the Russia-NATO Council. I believe it is of principal importance that we have been able to concentrate our work together with NATO on areas that correspond to Russia’s long-term interests”³⁵. This provides grounds for optimism about future relations between Russia and the Alliance.

Examining Russian integration into the system of transatlantic security, special attention should be paid to the bilateral US-Russian relationships, which also specify conditions for Russian involvement. When he came into power, Putin had learned the lessons from Yeltsin’s politics and demonstrated his pragmatism and his respect to the fact that partnership with the west is inevitable. He also understood that despite their ambitions and rhetoric, European countries have no instruments or will to oppose the global leadership of the United States. This forced the Russian president to attach primary importance to US-Russian relationships.

As a successor to the Soviet Union, Russia took its legacy, obligations and automatically some patterns in bilateral relations with the United States from its past. If we look at the number of bilateral agreements during the last several years, we would find that a significant portion of them touch upon the most serious and global problems of contemporary security. The same logic prevails in many current initiatives in security area, which is related to cooperation in fighting international terrorism, non-proliferation of WMD, chemical and biological weapons etc. Washington prefers to settle the less important security issues through NATO instruments. However, it is worth saying that Russia does not occupy a central place in the foreign policy of the United States; on the contrary, it has been moved to the periphery and, at times, off the main agenda.

Nevertheless, despite very optimistic statements that we may hear at the highest-level meetings, there is a large quantity of problems that have become apparent during the last years of cooperation. Many US observers stress that the over-personalization of relationships between two countries is very dangerous and may lead to deadlock³⁶. However, close personal relations between George Bush and “his friend Vladimir”, who was promoted from “that guy Putin”, of

³⁴ Ekaterina Labetskaya Informatsiya o NATO Dolzhna Dostich Rossiiskoi Glubinki [Information about NATO has to Achieve Russian Regions] *Vremya Novostei* no. 33, 2005-02-28.

³⁵ Vladimir Putin, ‘Speech at the meeting of the Security Council’, Moscow, January 28, 2005. Available at: <http://www.kremlin.ru/text/appears/2005/01/83182.shtml>

³⁶ “Putin’s Choice” *Wall Street Journal Europe*, 26 September 2003, p. A8; “How to check Vladimir Putin” *The Economist*, 13 March 2004, Vol.307 Issue8366, p.17.

course seriously affect the overall framework of Russian-US relations and add a very strong positive note to it.

The recent Bratislava Summit confirmed the spirit of “strategic relationship” established between the two parties in 2002³⁷ and underlined very promising formulations of areas of practical cooperation. These areas embrace enhancement of an emergency response capability to deal with a nuclear or radiological incident, including development of additional technical methods to detect nuclear and radioactive materials that are, or may be, involved in the incident; working together to help ensure full implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540; sharing “best practices” for the sake of improving security at nuclear facilities, both bilaterally and also with other nations with advanced nuclear programs; enhancement of the “security cultures” in both countries. Russia and the United States are also expressed their readiness to work jointly to develop low-enriched uranium fuel for use in any U.S.- and Russian-design research reactors in third countries now using high-enriched uranium fuel, and to return fresh and spent high-enriched uranium from U.S.- and Russian-design research reactors in third countries³⁸. However it is also true that there are some difficulties on the road to full-fledged cooperation. It is true that practical cooperation still very often replaced with declarations. In connection to this, we may agree with the statement by Alexander Vershbow, U.S. Ambassador to Russia, that now it is not enough to stress the “easy” questions in relations between Russia and the United States. It is time to finally move towards the issues where we still have traditional distrust and mutual suspicion, particularly in the spheres of military cooperation and intelligence³⁹. Nonetheless, when it comes to sensitive issues, parties may face a very hard burden of previous years of confrontation which is very difficult to overcome.

First, America tends to be more and more critical about perspectives of democracy in Russia. In his recent inaugural speech and State of the Union address, George Bush stressed the strong commitment of the United States to promoting support and assistance in building democracy all over the world. This should be understood as one more reminder for Moscow that the Russian drift from democracy may cause deterioration in American attitudes toward Russia. It may also mean that critics of Moscow’s “undemocratic” behavior will be louder in the foreseeable future. The recent Summit and Bush’s stressing of the Putin’s quality of a “fellow who, when he says, yes, he means, yes, and when he says, no, he means, no”⁴⁰, made it sound like though America is waiting for Moscow to prove its adherence to democratic values.

Secondly, there are serious differences between Russian and American strategies regarding post-Soviet space. The Russian side perceives this area as a zone of its national interests closely related to national security. American activity in this sphere arouses some discontent in the Kremlin and provokes nationalist forces inside Russia⁴¹. America, on the other hand, continues

³⁷ See Joint Statement by President George W. Bush and President Vladimir V. Putin on the New Strategic Relationship <http://www.ln.mid.ru/Bl.nsf/arh/2DCE6AFF465DA78843256D390029E6CC?OpenDocument>

³⁸ U.S.-Russia Joint Fact Sheet: Bratislava Initiatives. <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/prsrl/2005/42694.htm>

³⁹ Round Table organized by the Nezavisimaya Gazeta: Russia-US – Indistinct Dialogue. Basic Values are Different, but Interests are Common *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* no. 80, 19.04.2004 <http://www.ebiblioteka.ru/sources/article.jsp?id=6160601>

⁴⁰ President Bush and President Putin Discuss Strong U.S.-Russian Partnership, Bratislava, Slovakia February 24, 2005, <http://www.state.gov/p/eur/rls/rm/42693.htm>

⁴¹ Alexey Matveev Russia may lose its leverage in CIS // *Voenno-Promyshlennii Kur'er* 2005.02.02; USA aimed at Caucasus *RIA Novosti* 2005.03.02 <http://www.rambler.ru/db/news/msg.html?mid=5655861>

to pursue its own strategy, defining this region as vital to its national interests and does not consider that the strengthening of the Russian presence there will promote reliable stability and democratization. At the same time, it is possible to surmise that events in the Russian “near abroad” now have a small influence on US attitude to Russia. Moscow showed an incapability not only to oppose democratic revolutions in the neighbor countries, improperly using political instruments and relaying on old methods of Soviet conduct, but also has lost much of its positive image among citizens of these countries. This situation makes Russia a weak player and the United States has no reason to put its policy in dependence on Russian strategy in the “near abroad”.

Third, United States has its own views on a transformed New Europe and the Middle East and is not likely to change its willingness to act without any bindings to the United Nations or other multilateral instruments. Generally, the US does not see Russia as a global player in the international arena due to its economic, political and military weakness. It is also very important to say that noncrystalline and unsophisticated definitions of Russian national interests make it semi-impossible to concretize US-Russian relations. As Lilia Shevtsova put it, Russia changes its understanding of national interests depending on temporary political juncture rather than long-term state priority, which is badly reflected on relations with the United States on a broader strategic level⁴². This is why it is difficult to talk about relationships based on equality. Besides this, the long-term strategy of the US in regard to the most pressing security issues has not yet been completely shaped and will depend on the intermediate results of the ongoing missions on the Eurasian continent.

It is not yet possible to talk about unanimity of Russian and American views on North Korea and Iran, but what seems positive today is the Moscow and Washington preference to justify their positions publicly and seek for common ground. Nevertheless, when strategic decisions of how to stabilize the region are made in Washington, Russia will be forced to make its choice either to support the US or to stay in opposition. Then, the positive tone of the dialogue will be replaced with pressure which is not in Moscow’s interests. At the same time, we may find in Russia a gradual energization of the forces that does not support the pragmatic course of Russian foreign policy, aimed to the partnership with the United States. In particular, those who were responsible for the failure of Russian policy in Ukraine prefer to explain their incompetence by the inimical policy of the West. The top Russian leadership, on the other hand, demonstrates their adherence to the developing a strong partnership. As President Putin put it, “It is obvious that Russia and the U.S. share long-term interests, genuine strategic goals... This reality is not affected by the circumstances of the moment or the political situation”.⁴³ In general, the course of partnership chosen after September 11th, continues to prevail in relations between Moscow and Washington, but the changing security environment makes this situation not as steady as it may seem. The near future could bring the necessity of making tough decisions both for Russia and the United States in regard to prospective for bilateral relations.

In summary, despite a real interest of European countries and the United States in Russian participation, its involvement in the transatlantic security agenda remains limited. There are several reasons for this. Russian participation in the EU security initiatives, particularly ESDP,

⁴² Round Table «Nezavisimaia Gazeta»:Russia-US – indistinct dialogue. Basic values are different, but interests are common *Nezavisimaia Gazeta* no. 80, 19.04.2004 <http://www.ebiblioteka.ru/sources/article.jsp?id=6160601>

⁴³ Press Conference on the Results of Russian-American Talks, February 24, 2005 Bratislava, Slovakia

collides with lack of practical implementations and divergence in views on basic values and lack of understanding of mutual status in the global arena. As many experts agree, Russia-EU security cooperation has become a triumph of form over substance. Today we can see a very limited number of areas where Russia and the European Union could cooperate practically and this situation is unlikely to be changed in the next few years.

Russian relations with NATO, on the other hand, have made real progress during the last several years. Russian leadership defines NATO as a core embodiment of the system of transatlantic security and has a long-term strategy for rapprochement. The practical component of cooperation is the most intense and has very strong potential for further development. At the same time, some portions of mutual suspicions are contained in relations between Russia-NATO and this is leading to limited sharing of interests. Some powerful forces inside Russia still pursue their goals by exploiting, at times successfully, the old image of NATO as an enemy. All the following issues like NATO enlargement, Russian democratic and political transition as well as further institutionalization of mutual relationships hold serious challenges for both sides in the future:

US-Russian relations in the field of security also give us an example of ambivalence. On one hand, both parties are interested in the development of a partnership, in the maintenance of strategic stability and nonproliferation of WMD, and both the US and Russia attach primary importance to this kind of cooperation. On the other hand, some issues connected to Russian democratic transition, different aspects of strategy toward the Russian neighbor countries, and stabilization in the Middle East raises some disputes. These disputes, however, are not on the level of principle contradictions, which makes it possible to keep the positive tone of dialogue. A possible change of this ‘status quo’ presents Russia with the serious dilemma of whether to support American strategy, which is not always advantageous to Russia, or to try to oppose it relying on very limited instruments and assets⁴⁴. The United States, for its part, is not interested in helping Russia get back its status of global power; on the contrary there are some signs that the US pursue goals to hold Russian ambitions in check (especially in the post-Soviet space). This is why the United States prefers to develop partnership with Russia on more or less narrow issues, and not to touch questions of common strategy and common perspective on the overall transatlantic security system.

In the final analysis, we may talk about the definite asymmetry in the current stage of Russian involvement in the system of transatlantic security. Apparently, the Kremlin understands this fact and it forces Russian leaders not to put a preponderant attention to American or European direction of the foreign policy. The importance of sustaining relations with all major centers of power and attempting to avoid the danger of developing one course to the detriment of another remains a priority for the Russian policy makers. All this creates image of a certain fragmentary character of the Russian foreign policy and produces the situation in which the established ‘pragmatic course’ experiences a serious test for its durability.

⁴⁴ Yurii Fedorov, ‘Bratislava: Sammit Proshel, Problemy Ostayutsya’ [Bratislava: Summit Passed, Problems Remain] *Evropeyskaya Bezopasnost’: Sobytiia, Otsenki, Prognozy*, No. 15, March, 2005, p. 4.

3. Russia in the system of transatlantic security: prospective scenarios

Contemporary Russian foreign policy has definite disadvantages due to the lack of a clear strategic line. According to statement of an influential Russian political scientist, Alexey Arbatov, “Russian external policy experiences the lack of any initiative, it is reactive – meaning that it only reacts to external events”⁴⁵ The foreign policy priorities, usually expressed by Russian politicians about strategic priorities of this country, often contradict each other and change as fast as situation in international or internal policy. All this makes Russia very difficult partner the West. Consequently, Russia more and more often falls into the situation when its freedom in the definition of its political strategy is seriously affected by a variety of external processes on which Russia has very little or even no influence. In our opinion, the same factor shapes the situation with Russian involvement and its place within the system of transatlantic security. This conclusion gives us an opportunity to define the possible vectors in Russian foreign policy in the framework of suggested scenarios for transatlantic relations.

In the case of deepening and intensification of contradictions between the transatlantic allies, Russian relations with Europe and the United States may be characterized as a strategy of ‘Careful Balance’. In these conditions Russian policy will be affected by a variety of different factors. First of all, it will be easier for Russian political and military elites to accept with the changed rhetoric of the transatlantic relations due to the traditional emphasis on the ‘Realpolitik’ in Russian foreign policy. Russian attempts to experiment with the ideas of liberal internationalism, which were taken in Boris Yeltsin and Andrey Kozyrev’s period, are now considered by many people to be an incorrect course that leads to deadlock.

In this context it is very important to look at the practice of “Putin’s placement” to the key positions within his administration and other important state agencies. This process itself, however, is not new, and has been experienced by many previous Russian and non-Russian leaders. To a certain extent it was unusual because the key positions were given to former military officers, military-industrial establishment specialists as well as those who have a Security Service or Intelligence Service background. Eventually, Putin created a definite group of his like-minded colleagues who have made impressive careers since 2000. Today’s Putin’s elites and the President himself are having “more realistic assessment of Russian interests capabilities”.⁴⁶ As the Minister of Defense, Sergey Ivanov, stresses, “The administration of the country and Ministry of Defense have a clear program of development and the increase of the effectiveness of military powers is based on the realistic understanding of the state’s abilities as well as the problems which have to be solved in the process of its integration to the contemporary system of international relations”.⁴⁷ This is why it seems quite easy for Russia to accept the situation when the leadership in the world is defined exclusively by military and economical figures.

Despite the belief of many foreign experts that those Russian politicians who originate from the security and military service are trained to be suspicious of everything “Western”, it is not correct. On the contrary, there are many of them who believe in and are dedicated to

⁴⁵ Alexey Arbatov’s Interview to the *Profil'* magazine. *Profil'* No. 6, 21 February, 2005, p.32.

⁴⁶ Allen Lynch, ‘The Realism of Russia’s Foreign policy’, *Europe-Asia Studies*, Vol. 53, No. 1, 2001, p. 23.

⁴⁷ Sergey Ivanov, ‘Bolshaya Strategiya. Rossiiskie Vooruzhennye Sily I Ee Geopoliticheskie Priorityty’ [Big Strategy. Russia’s Geopolitical Priorities and Armed Forces]. *Russia in Global Affairs*, No. 1. 2004, p. 51.

strengthening cooperation with western partners. At the same time, most Russian officials prefer to use instruments of *Realpolitik* and stress national interests, which is, in their opinion, based on the broadening of Russian influence in world politics in general and particularly in the post-Soviet space. All this serves as a very specific background for Russian foreign policy.

During the past this very characteristic of the modern Russian elite strengthened the ideas that successful assurance of national interests is possible only relying on the military power including the nuclear potential.⁴⁸ Striving for the intensification of the influence on the former Soviet space as well as the attempt to activate the Eastern direction of the external policy is aimed at the strengthening of Russia's international status. It stresses the fact that realism occupies rather solid positions in the minds of the Russian elite. As Michael Margelov, Chair of the International Committee of the Russian Federation Council, said in relation to the objectives of Russian external policy in the Eastern direction: "The main thing is intensification of the economic and strategic positions of Russia, gaining purely practical bonuses. The aim of formation of some eastern counterbalance of NATO, will be achieved as well. These processes are parallel but the economic component still holds primary importance."⁴⁹

However, despite very special attention to the protection and assurance of the national interests and so-called "new pragmatism" of Russian policy during the second term of Vladimir Putin's presidency, Russia is ready to accept the US world superiority. It is clear for President Putin's administration that in the present circumstances strategic partnership and support from the United States may become a pledge for the strengthening of Russian positions in the world. Russia is interested in the United States as a strong leader of a coalition of the world's most powerful states that can address the dangerous challenges of the new age⁵⁰. It is clear that in exchange for support from the US, Russia will wait for definite concessions from the US side and expect certain support of Russia's policy toward the 'near abroad'. Hence, the strengthening of Russian positions within the CIS also called 'Russian geopolitical space' is continuing to be one of the most important aims of Russian foreign policy.

Admitting the importance and priority of the strengthening of relations with the United States, Russia, at the same time, is not interested in worsening the relations with Europe. The European Union will remain not only the main trade partner but also an important ally in strengthening the regional security and stability. As Angela Stent surmises, 'Russia continues to seek recognition from the United States as an equal global partner, whereas its goals towards the EU are more regionally focused'.⁵¹ At the same time, Russia's interest in strengthening the European vector of the external policy will be preserved even in the situation of the weakening of transatlantic ties.

As Dmitry Rogozin, the leader of political party "Rodina", argues, the choice in favor of partnership with the US and NATO to the detriment of the European vector is an "absolutely

⁴⁸ Sergey Breznikun 'Yadernaya Geopolitika Rossii' [Russian Nuclear Geopolitics] *Voenno-Promyshlennyi Kur'er*, No. 6, 2005; The Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation. Report "Actual Tasks for Development of Russian Military Forces". URL: <<http://www.mil.ru/articles/article5005.shtml>>.

⁴⁹ Interview of Michael Margelov, Chairman of the International Committee of Russian Federation Council, to *Rossiiskaya Gazeta* No. 60, 25 March, 2005.

⁵⁰ Sergei Karaganov, 'Russia and the international order', in Dov Lynch (ed.), 'What Russia Sees', *Chaillot Paper*, no. 74, January 2005, p. 41.

⁵¹ Angela Stent, 'American Views on Russian Security Policy and EU-Russian Relations', Prepared for the IISS/CEPS European Security Forum, Brussels, January 14, 2002, p. 1. See: <http://www.eusec.org/stent.htm>

false and even dangerous choice”⁵². In fact, the question must be formulated in another way. There is no need for Russia to make its choice between Europe and America. Both directions should compliment one another. The relations with the US are more essential regarding the international security, but they still do not have an economic basis despite some serious efforts taken, especially in the energy sector. On the contrary, Russian relations with the EU have a solid economic basis. Russia will rather strive to smooth the sharpest contradictions among the transatlantic allies. Thus, considering the scenario of the transatlantic split it may be said that Russia in this case has an opportunity to acquire a certain advantage from the clashes between the US and the “Old” Europe – primarily France and Germany. The transatlantic split improves Russian position as a balancer and gives a favorable opportunity to bargain with both sides. However, in the long-term prospective neither transatlantic disagreement nor even split are not favorable for Russia. They may cause problems, because in choosing one of them, Russia automatically puts relations with the other side in danger. During the past years the main emphasis of Russian foreign policy strategy has been on improving relations with all major “centers of power” including Europe and the United States. It would be incorrect to expect Russia to change this course, although this may lead to a serious weakening of its positions in the international arena.

The political position that was chosen by the Russian government during the crisis over the war in Iraq could be given as an example of possible Russian conduct. The major objectives for Russia were to preserve auspicious politics in its relations with Europe and the US, to save good relations with the European countries that formed an opposition to the US actions, and not to freeze the positive dynamic of the development of a strategic partnership with the United States but, at the same time, to try to restore the authority of the UN Security Council. However, Russian behavior in that period when the UNSC was in the impasse situation and in the following period when the US began the military actions allowed Russia to position itself as a mediator between the coalition lead by the United States and the “Old Europe”. That is why, unlike France and Germany, which stopped political contacts with Bush and the US top officials, Moscow kept a careful policy, leaving open channels for communication and rapprochement with Washington and London. The success of such a policy was brilliantly expressed in Condoleezza Rice’s formula ‘punish France, ignore Germany and forgive Russia’. Thus a diplomatic crisis around Iraq showed a possible model of how Russian foreign policy may be formed in the case of crisis in relations between the transatlantic allies. On one hand, Moscow tried to aim its efforts at strengthening of multilateralism in the international relations and support European countries which opposed the beginning of military actions without the resolution of the UNSC. On the other hand, the price of worsening the US-Russian bilateral relations was too high for Moscow, having in mind desirable integration into the Western structures as well as long-term national interests and security.

Perspectives for transatlantic relations from the point of view of liberal theory, with common strategic goals and values will promote the unity of Europe and America. The unanimity of views between transatlantic allies based on liberal values will undoubtedly add some new specific to the character of their relations with Russia. In such a case the possible scenario of

⁵² Dmitry Rogozin, ‘Europe is the Second Motherland for Us. Our contradictions with the Neighbor on the Continent Confirm Intensity and the Depth of Our Relationships’, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 26 June, 2003.

Russian interaction in the system of the transatlantic security could be characterized as “Unequal partnership”.

The grounds for this scenario originated from the fact that despite the intensified Russian integration into the Euro-Atlantic community, many Western politicians and experts repeatedly stress that there are many obstacles in the process of Russian rapprochement with Europe and the US. In their opinion, some recent changes that have occurred in Russia and connected to the processes of democratic transition and the building of a civil society indicated out that Russia was drifting from a democratic to an authoritarian state. The fact that many western politicians and experts – both in the United States and Europe – are not pleased with contemporary Russia testifies to this. For some commentators in contemporary Russia, it is neither a fully liberal state, nor a “reliable” ally.⁵³ Analysis of the process of the formation of the ruling political elite shows that the alliance between forces related to military or security services, created an unprecedented state system where Security Services merged with the bureaucracy⁵⁴. All this gives little credit to the Russian governing system which is characterized by its extremely low transparency, impenetrable politics and the decision-making process.

It should be stressed that the majority of leaders, both in Europe and the US, agree that it is necessary to strengthen partnership relations with Russia. At the same time, they share the opinion that in its present condition Russia is not ready to integrate into the system of transatlantic security. The old prejudices and stereotypes still play a great role in the formation of Western opinion about today’s Russia. However, for the most part, very little is known about Russian culture, mentality and language in Europe and the United States. The general image of Russia still contains some negative elements, and additionally, Russia possesses a huge territory and many resources. These two factors – lack of knowledge and Russia’s size makes Russia to look frightening.⁵⁵ The West is starting to beware of Russia, which is becoming more authoritarian and at the same developing its economic and military potential. “We must call things by their names: neither the United States nor the EU wants to have such a Russia that we can see now before the international community”, Alexander Rahr argues⁵⁶. In connection to this, we may say that the United States and the EU agree in principle that Russia must be kept in check and unable to push out to its former Soviet Union borders. At the same time, they do not want to do anything that could dramatically hurt Russian relations with the West. Broadly speaking, the United States has supported EU policies toward Russia and has viewed them as complimentary to American goals.

Thus, in relations with the transatlantic allies who are united by common values and common strategic priorities, Russia will remain partially involved in the common system of transatlantic security. It is possible to expect a growth of pressure in terms of democratization, respect to

⁵³ Nikolai Gvosdev, ‘The Sources of Russian Conduct’, *The National Interest*, Spring 2004. p. 36.

⁵⁴ Kryshtanovskaya Olga ‘Rezhim Putina: Liberalnaya militokratia?’ [Putin’s Regime: Liberal “Militocracy”], *Pro et Contra*, No. 4, 2002.Baev, Pavel K. ‘The Evolution of Putin’s Regime. Inner Circles and Outer Walls’, *Problems of Post-Communism*, Vol. 51 no. 6, November/December 2004; see also Bukkovol, Tor ‘Putin’s strategic partnership with the West: The Domestic Politics of Russian Foreign Policy’, *Comparative Strategy*, no. 22, 2003. Alexey Mukhin, *Piterskoe Okruzhenie Prezidenta*. [Putin’s Circle of Fellows from St. Petersburg] Moscow: Center for Political Research, 2003.

⁵⁵ Djovanni Bensi, ‘Avtoritarnyi Dreif Kremlja ne ponyat Mirom’ [Kremlin’s Authoritarian Drift Mitts no Understanding by the Rest of the World], *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 11 September 2004.

⁵⁶ Alexander Rahr, ‘The West Prefer to Keep Moscow in Distance’, *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*, 1 March, 2004.

human rights and the formation of civil society. This pressure is more likely to be accompanied with attempts of the gradual weakening of Russian influence within the CIS region. Nevertheless, Russia will be forced to accept the new rhetoric of relations with the West. The reason for this, on one hand, rests on the fact that the process of democratization, in the way that is considered favorable for the West, would not demonstrate a remarkable dynamic. On the other hand, a pragmatic course of Russia's foreign policy aimed at the smoothing of contradictions with the transatlantic allies seems for Putin's administration quite logical and unlikely to be changed in the years ahead.

This pressure will surely provoke respective anti-Western reaction inside Russia. It is worth to remembering that patriotic and nationalist forces embrace more than 20 percent of Russian electors⁵⁷, and we may say that these views on foreign policy have a sizable constituency. That is why the possible pressure on Russia will become only a catalyst for the strengthening of these political forces. All these confirm the existence of a relatively strong confrontational potential that may, in some circumstances, become a serious obstacle in the way of Russian cooperation with the West. In other words, demonstration of the attitude to Russia as to a weak or unreliable partner may cause a restoration of various kinds of Cold War complexes among Russian elite and society. We may find a good example in a recent speech, in which President Putin articulated definite hints that Russia has external enemies who try to weaken the country. In his address after the drastic events connected to the hostages taken in Beslan: "Some would like to tear from us a "juicy piece of pie". Others help them. They help, reasoning that Russia still remains one of the world's major nuclear powers, and as such still represents a threat to them. And so they reason that this threat should be removed"⁵⁸. Consequently, certain conditions may create a situation when 'some' and 'others' may receive more definite names.

The difference in the understanding and evaluation of Russian progress on the way to democratization has become a reason for definite worry. The facts show that there are still big differences between Russian and Western understandings of democracy. Recent surveys show that 61% of Russians want to live in a democratic country, but the majority of the respondents are sure that during Putin's Presidency, Russia has become more democratic than during Yeltsin's or Gorbachev's terms.⁵⁹ Hence, beliefs that Russia should move quickly toward western style democracy, and that is a strong liberal opposition ready to lead such a transition, are wrong. This will take at least a generation. In reality, Russia's first taste of democracy was bitter. And, fairly or unfairly, those who championed it have to share the responsibility for policies that created misery for tens of millions while grotesquely enriching a favored few.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Rating of public support for Russian Political Parties, presented on March 22, 2005 by WCIOM (All-Russian Center for Analysis of Public Opinion), Parties that represents Patriotic and Nationalist movement: Communist Party – 10%, Liberal Democratic Partiy – 8%, Political coalition "Rodina" – 7%.

URL: <http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=42&article=1143>.

⁵⁸ Address by President Vladimir Putin September 4, 2004 Moscow, Kremlin

http://www.kremlin.ru/eng/speeches/2004/09/04/1958_type82912_76332.shtml.

⁵⁹ 'Democracy in Russia', survey presented by the Public Opinion Foundation [Fond Obschestvennoe Mnenie], on 03.31.2005. <http://www.fom.ru/topics/775.html> See also: Nelli Romanovich, 'Democratic Values and Freedom "Russian Style", *Russian Social Science Review*, Vol. 45, no. 1, January-February 2004, pp. 42-48.

⁶⁰ Wedel, Janine R. *Collision and Collusion: The Strange Case of Western Aid to Eastern Europe 1989-1998*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998; Herring Ronald J. "Foreign assistance as genocide: the crisis in Russia, the IMF, and interethnic relations", in *Carrots, sticks, and ethnic conflict: rethinking development assistance*, ed. Milton J. Esman

These differences in attitudes toward democracy which exist among the Russian political elite as well as among large groups of Russian society and their Western counterparts who repeatedly express their concerns about Russian authoritarian drift, in our opinion, makes it quite hard to find a common ground for dialogue.

Summing up, the building of the relations between the West and Russia when the aspects of democratic values and success in building of civil society are assigned primary importance and have become major elements for transatlantic unity makes the dialogue between Russia and the transatlantic allies rather difficult. Wishing to see a democratic state at their borders, Europe and the US have defined a series of problems for Russia which the contemporary Russian administration is not ready to solve or does not want to solve. It is necessary to underline the fact that Russia's policy has become West-oriented and today's Russia may not be a direct threat to the United States and the EU. This situation, however, may be changed if strategic isolation will turn Russia into a country where nationalistic and patriotic forces that consider the West as an enemy pole, occupy the powerful positions. In this case, Russian involvement into the system of the transatlantic security and development of cooperation with the Allies may become one of the few possible ways to avoid drifting apart.

However, as it was mentioned earlier, the constructivist scenario, where we may see a combination of realism and liberalism is a more likely scenario for the future development of transatlantic relations. In connection to this, it is possible to say that the process of Russian integration into the system of transatlantic security will represent a mixture between elements of "Careful balance" and "Unequal partnership". The evaluation of major tendencies and elements for Russian policy within this combination allows us to characterize this scenario as "Improvement of asymmetry" The long term Russian interests, as repeatedly stressed by Russian leaders, undoubtedly should rest on the balanced improvement of relations with the United States as well as with the European countries, especially in the field of security. So, in the present state of affairs, despite all the difficulties along this way, Russia is ready to undertake the steps to achieve this objective.

Within this scenario, above all I would like to underline the most definitive decline of Russian attempts to play openly on the contradictions between America and Europe. The current Russian government is not trying to adopt USSR policy, when the Soviet elite pursued to get as many benefits as possible from the transatlantic disagreements and, at times, made some efforts to inspire these arguments. Such a fruitless practice can hardly be attached to Moscow's highest priorities and goals of strengthening its position among the most influential and powerful countries of the world. The analysis of contemporary debates between America and Europe shows that in spite of remaining disagreements on a wide range of issues the allies do not see Russia as an alternative partner that could potentially replace one or another side of Atlantic. Moscow clearly understands this fact as well. An absolute majority of the Russian leaders realize that Russia has lost its status of global power and its influence on the processes in the international arena is very limited. The Soviet Union's collapse was accompanied with gradual loss of all Russian strong positions in the world and the region, and this process continued for more than a decade. The term of 'Geopolitical catastrophe', used by President Putin in his recent

address to the Federal Assembly when he described the collapse of the USSR⁶¹, has met a strong wave of incomprehension and has provoked astonishment in the West. Meanwhile, in some experts' opinion, Putin simply expressed the obvious⁶². Nonetheless, it does not mean that Russia is planning to refuse attempts to bring back its former status of a strong power. On the contrary, this aspiration will shape the Russian political behavior and its foreign policy for the next several years.

One of the major directions of Russian foreign policy, in the author's opinion, will be concentrated on broadening Russian involvement and participation in the resolution of all major international issues. There are several reasons why Russian leaders attach extremely strong importance to this kind of engagement. First, it seriously affects the improvement of a positive international image of the Russian Federation, which was been weakened dramatically during the last several years. While Russia cannot contend for parity with the West on a global scale, in some regions of the world, it can be an equal if not senior partner to its Western allies⁶³. It is grows from the Russian political tradition that emphasize broader involvement into the world affairs as an indispensable attribute of the global power. Second, some actual and pressing contemporary issues directly touch Russian national interests, and the resolution of these problems without Russian involvement is defined by Moscow as unacceptable practice.

President Putin's tour to the Middle East could be taken as one of the most recent examples that describe Russia's strong will to become a more active player on the international arena. Politically it may be defined as an attempt to renew Russian strong positions within the Muslim world in general and particularly in this region. Besides this, the recent tour had an objective to demonstrate to Russia's Western partners that Moscow does not intend to refuse participation in the peace process in the Middle East, turning the initiative over to the American hands. Quite the contrary, Russia is planning to play an indispensable role in this sector and rehabilitate its traditional status of the reliable partner for Arab countries and one of the key actors in the region. As it was pointed out in the Middle Eastern Media, 'The Russian President's trip to the Middle East may be defined as the first step toward the restoration of Russia's former place on the Middle Eastern chessboard'⁶⁴. It appears that the Kremlin will actively continue to seek ways to improve its status of strong power especially in the key regions and to try to increase the extent of Western interest of cooperation with Russia as a strong ally and not only an insignificant actor. Additionally, alongside with the achievement of the goal of restoration of Russian influence, these steps may add new substance to the Russian partnership with the United States, European Union and NATO.

Besides, Russia attempts to pursue the active engagement in the resolution of the most actual contemporary security problems. It should help to occupy the central position in the post-Soviet area. It is also very important, in the mind of Russian leaders, to attain the goal of improving an inequality in the relations with transatlantic allies. That is why we may conclude that

⁶¹ Address to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation. April 25, 2005.

http://www.kremlin.ru/appears/2005/04/25/1223_type63372type82634_87049.shtml

⁶² George Friedman, 'Debating Russia's Fate', published by STRATFOR, May 09, 2005. URL: <http://80-www.stratfor.biz.proxy.www.merln-europe.org/Story.neo?storyId=248165>

⁶³ Nikolai Zlobin, 'The United States, Russia, and the New Challenges', *Democratizatsiya*, Vol. 11, Issue 1, Winter 2003, p.47.

⁶⁴ 'Putin's Middle Eastern Game', Kuwait Times, 3 May 2005, http://www.kuwaittimes.net/today/analysis_s3.php visited 05.04.2005.

considerable efforts will be devoted to this issue. However, recent events that occur in Georgia and Ukraine confirmed that Russia currently has neither sufficient assets nor clear plans and a strategy on its way of achieving the goal of integration of its neighbors that constitute the ‘near abroad’ into the close circle of supporters and allies. The most important question here is what kind of instruments Russia will choose to attain the above-mentioned objective. Would they be economic and political levers which will be used for the alignment of the CIS states? Would Russia adopt not only an energy policy as an instrument for possible pressure, but also a competent investment plans, and mutual integration of industries? Or would it be a special stress on development of Russia’s military might, which may be used for the assurance of the national security and stability of its neighbors? The answer is not yet obvious as it may seem.

Clearly, many facts demonstrate that for the Russian political elite as well as for large groups within Russian society, the strengthening of Russian geopolitical positions in the region is not simply a question of self-respect. For great deal of Russians this is one of the key prerequisites for the entire revival of Russia as a great nation, and on the contrary, gradual loss of its positions here may be defined as the main feature of national degradation. A recent surveys, made by the All-Russian Center for Analysis of Public Opinion, shows that 52% of respondents are seriously concerned about US and European activity in the neighbor states, more than 80% think that Russia should preserve its military presence in the territory of some CIS states in Central Asia and Caucasus, and about 51% are absolutely sure that Russia should react strictly, in one way or another, on ‘unfriendly’ demarches presented by some neighbor states⁶⁵. Consequently, we may declare that some suspicion about the possible Western threat to Russian vital interests in the region still exists and may become a potential obstacle on the way of rapprochement. Russian officials and politicians are also repeatedly expressed their misgiving on this issue. In one of his speeches, Nikolay Patrushev, Director of the Federal Security Service stressed that ‘the FSB has an information that some western NGO’s are deeply involved in the preparation of so called ‘velvet revolutions’ on the post-Soviet space’ and articulated his serious concerns about this dangerous practice⁶⁶. Thus, all this leads to the conclusion that some serious problems on the way of reducing the Russian suspicious attitude toward the West still exist. At the same time, Russia is not interested to transforming the CIS region into the ground for strict rivalry with the West. As Russian minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov put it, – ‘The EU-Russian Summit proved that the EU officials in Brussels realize that the attitude towards the CIS countries as a potential field of rivalry is hopeless and leads to deadlock’. ‘We [Russia] are not seeking a monopoly in this region, but we will not allow anybody else to have a monopoly here’, – Sergey Lavrov stressed. That is why it is logically to expect that any changes in Russia’s and the Western influence in the CIS region will seriously affect future relationships between the parties. The extent of mutual trust and rapprochement will depend not only on Russia, but also on the constructive and intelligent position of the transatlantic allies.

In such conditions Russia will be looking for the United States’ support of its positions within the region. It seems that the new Bush administration, despite its critics of Russia, is disposed to treat Russian interests beyond its borders with greater understanding. The United States’ refusal

⁶⁵ Survey presented by WCIOM (All-Russian Center for Analysis of Public Opinion), Press release No. 206, ‘Russians against the strengthening of the “Western” influence within the CIS area’, <http://www.wciom.ru/?pt=53&article=1252>.

⁶⁶ Nikolai Patrushev: The New “Velvet Revolutions” Sponsored by the West, RIA “Novosti” <http://www.rian.ru/politics/foreign/20050512/39971836.html>, visited on 05.12.2005.

to interfere in the resolution of territorial disputes in the Caucasus is gives evidence for the previous thesis. Apparently, the US is not interested in having the future Russia as an extremely weak partner that will lose even its status of regional power. Further weakening of Russia automatically leads to the strengthening of the positions of other states like China, Iran, etc., which may be even less beneficial to US interests. Furthermore, the continuing fall of Russia's status within the post-Soviet space will also lead to strengthening of nationalist forces inside the country and, possibly, to the internal disintegration, which may be dangerous to the stability of entire region.

The United States and Europe, it is necessary to add, have no alternative and equally influential partner in the region as Russia and there is no clear evidence that they will have one in the foreseeable future. The prospect for democracy in Ukraine is not yet obvious. Many experts agree that the new Ukrainian elite is more oriented toward redistribution of assets and property than fundamental reforms in the country. As for Georgia, successful democratic reforms are also not so impressive. The US's financial aid and help in formation of a new Georgian society during the last several years has done little to solve the small state's protracted ethnic and regional conflicts or ease its energy and economic dependence on Russia. In this connection the need for seeking ways of sustainable cooperation and rapprochement with Russia while avoiding an aggressive competition, which may lead to destructive consequences, is obvious.

It is worth saying, however, that besides mutual interest in Brussels and Washington to sustain and develop a security partnership with Moscow, Russia will remain a country that has relatively little flexibility in picking up the level of rapprochement and involvement. In such a situation the initiative for bridging a divide between Russia and the West will be kept more on the side of the United States' and the European Union's side. Economic weakness and numerous unresolved internal problems makes Russia more interested in cooperation and improvement of asymmetry and in pursuing the increase of strong relationships with all the key units and institutions that constitute the system of transatlantic security. In the years ahead, among other things, the dynamics of Russian internal reforms, the necessity of which repeatedly mentioned by the Allies, is unlikely to be accelerated. Consequently, much will depend on the strategy for cooperation that will be adopted by Europe and the United States, having in mind the Russian reality. Of course, there are certainly areas where close collaboration is inevitable as well as some issues for potential arguments. As Sergey Karaganov, the President of the Foreign and Defense Policy Council, pointed out, a fully-fledged union between Russia and the West is not yet possible. Moreover, such a union could be disadvantageous to Russia, as it has a unique geopolitical position⁶⁷. The challenge for the United States and the EU in the next several years is to encourage domestic evolution in Russia that combines market-oriented economic reform with as much pluralism, democracy and rule of law as the Putin administration will tolerate, while strengthening trilateral security cooperation in Europe⁶⁸. The task is fairly ambitious and its successful achievement will depend not only on efforts undertaken in Russia, but also on the constructive and comprehensible position of the West.

⁶⁷ Sergei Karaganov, 'Russia and the international order', in Dov Lynch (ed.), 'What Russia Sees', *Chaillot Paper*, no. 74, January 2005, p. 40. Margot Light, 'In Search of an Identity: Russian Foreign policy and the End of Ideology', *Journal of Communist Studies & Transition Politics*, Sep2003, Vol. 19 Issue 3, p.52.

⁶⁸ Angela Stent, 'American Views on Russian Security Policy and EU-Russian Relations', Prepared for the IISS/CEPS European Security Forum, Brussels, January 14, 2002, p. 5.

Conclusion

Political changes that occur in the United States and Europe seriously affect the entire system of transatlantic relations. Obviously, it would be impossible to turn back to the time when the US and Europe unconditionally shared common and unanimous views on a wide range of international issues. Some analysts suggest different kinds of prognoses, from deeply pessimistic to fairly auspicious. Indeed, it is possible to find many arguments in favor of the preservation of close ties and mutual dependence of the allies. There are also many persuasive factors which indicate that in the present international conditions it will be very hard to overcome growing contradictions between Europe and the United States. It is possible to say that we will witness the process of adaptation of transatlantic partnership to new conditions, when, alongside with commonly shared liberal values, greater importance will be attached to the different aspects of power, new principles of formation of alliances and coalitions, and transformation of major institutions which guarantee European and International security. These changes will undoubtedly affect the external policy not only of the European Union and the United States', but also of many other key players on the international scene, including, of course, Russia.

Today's landscape of partnership between Russia and the transatlantic allies represents a very complicated picture. On one hand all parties strongly interested in developing close cooperation. New challenges and threats leave no alternative to this process. Moreover, many leaders and politicians enthusiastically and with great satisfaction stress the positive dynamics in relations between Russia and countries and organizations that constitute the Euro-Atlantic security system. Possible achievements in the new and prospective areas of cooperation, which is being negotiated today on different political levels, look even more promising. Despite the fact that both the European Union and the United States have a number of claims against the Russian government, there are many of ways in which Russia can be successfully engaged. Many experts agree that it is counterproductive to isolate Russia. Close and sustainable political and economic ties may help Russia to feel that its own national interests are increasingly tied to those of the Euro-Atlantic Community. As George Voskopolulos put it, 'the formula one plus two (US+ EU and Russia) provides the opportunity for orchestrated action and potential control of Russia itself'⁶⁹ Of course, the practical implementation of these initiatives which is further promote of mutual trust and the strengthening security for the entire region.

On the other hand, there are some serious obstacles on the way of mutual rapprochement that still need to be overcome. It is also true that it is now untimely to speak about deep Russian integration with the other elements of the system. Hence the asymmetry in Russian engagement will remain as a fact for at least the next several years. All this presents Russia as well as the Euro-Atlantic community a number of serious challenges, which may prevent the making of strategic choice in favor of closer partnership.

A number of issues remain open and waiting for resolution. Russian government, for example, still has not worked out a detailed definitions and classification of the most pressing national security threats. The threats like disintegration of the country or tearing some territories away; depopulation, deepening of the moral crisis of the country, criminalization of power, a threat of loss of a sovereignty, etc are usually mentioned by politicians and scientists but have not been

⁶⁹ George Voskopolulos, 'U.S., Terrorism, International Security, and Leadership: Toward a U.S.-EU-Russia Security Triangle...Spring 2003, Vol. 11 Issue 2, p.175.

reflected fully in a strategic document. More importantly, there are no comprehensive plans of how to deal with these threats. Russian leaders also have to define openly who are Russia's possible allies and prospective adversaries. Having these questions answered, will be easier to construct and choose an optimal forms of cooperation between Russia and institutions and countries which constitute the system of Euro-Atlantic security. At the same time, clear picture and classification of threats could also define a goals and horizons of Russia's cooperation with its partners.

Among the most pressing issues on the Russian transformation agenda that directly relate to the problem of integration in the transatlantic security system, we should define the reform of the Armed Forces, which is moving very slowly. Serious attention should also be paid to the adaptation of new military doctrine, which, in some experts' opinion, does not completely meet the needs of the Russian Federation and present day security threats. Some old stereotypes of the Cold War, when the main threat rose from the West, still may be found in formulations of modern strategic priorities expressed by the Russian Ministry of Defense. Today many dangers and uncertainties grow in the South and the East, and should be taken into account when we are talking about the most effective defense strategy and planning. Unfortunately, it seems like the changed reality has not yet been fully reflected in the schemes drawn by some Russian strategists.

Limited coordination between military and foreign policies is also remains a very important problem for Russia. Very little and insufficient experience of prospective planning often forces the Russian government to react only to the changing external conditions and events. The conditions in which Russian policy makers are placed by this kind of practice usually leaves no time for the evaluation of long-term strategy and the most effective moves. Hopefully, a number of recent political miscalculations will force Russian decision makers to avoid these mistakes in the future.

However, difficulties in formulation of global aims and foreign policy objectives are not experienced only Russia. In some extent it appears that western countries have not yet worked out the long-term objectives and perspectives for development their relations with Russia, particularly between the EU and Russia and NATO and Russia. In some cases, the areas and forms of collaboration still require a certain definition. In other situations stress has been put on broadening and developing partnerships in the framework of previously achieved agreements. However, the slogan 'better and deeper' is not an objective, but is simply a process. Any process should have its goals. Otherwise, the ongoing politics comes to the question of tactics without any strategy.⁷⁰

Despite the fact that we can not talk about full integration of Russia into the Euro-Atlantic security structures, the West should address the fundamental questions: what gains can be expected from the broader and intense cooperation with Russia, and how these goals correspond to Russia's long-term national interests.

Forecasting of possible scenarios for developing of partnership and cooperation between Russia and transatlantic allies it is necessary to stress that either of these scenarios are not only

⁷⁰ Interview of Alexey Arbatov (Director of the program at Moscow Carnegie Center) to *Nezavisimaya Gazeta*. 13 March, 2005.

containing opportunities, but also many difficulties. In particular, the scenario of ‘improvement of asymmetry’ in Russian involvement into the system of transatlantic security, defined by the author as the most possible, is far from fully optimistic. There are still a lot of obstacles remains on the way of mutual rapprochement. The objectives of the parties within this scenario remain blurry. Moreover, there are many signs that in some points they diverge dramatically. Even in relations between Russia and NATO, defined by experts as the most positive and constructive, when it comes to practical military-to-military cooperation all the exercises are restricted to only training missions without definite plans connected to the grand strategy of close cooperation in future. Despite obvious political will to deepen cooperation, commentators usually stress that all the joint exercises are in fact have very modest practical military-strategic objectives and this makes relations look illusory.

If all above mentioned are characteristics for Russia-NATO relations, the most successful direction of Russian security and defense policy, the relations with the rest of the sides like the EU and the United States look even less impressive. Recent Russia EU summit in May 2005 showed that much has to be done before common space of external security will become a reality. The plans, which were reflected in the signed ‘roadmaps’ toward the common spaces, are likely to stick with previously unsolved issues, and there are no evidence that mutually accepted solutions would be elaborated in the nearest future. The Kremlin and European bureaucracy in Brussels, however, are very optimistic about the future of the ‘roadmap’. It leaves us a hope that potentialities in practical cooperation far from exhausting.

At the same time, close attention to the developing of partnership with the United States will remain. It is true that there are close ties between Europe and Russia, but as famous Russian scholar put it, “it is good to be friends with Europe during the peace time. But what if something happen? There are many threats Russia facing today and they could hardly be fought without the US support”⁷¹. This is a point of view of many Russian experts and politicians today. But it will be too naive to think that Russia and the United States sharing the same views on a number of global issues. It means that while building close relations with the US, Russia will have to sacrifice some of its national interests to this process. This of course leaves opportunities to those powers in Russia, which tend to oppose any close relations with the West. The greatest task for Russia is to find a reasonable balance between its interests and strategic necessity.

We must confess that by the course of historical, economic, political and geopolitical development during the last decades, Russia was assigned to occupy unprivileged place among other nations. One of the most serious trials for Russia has become realization the fact of loss of its exceptionality and global power. It is very difficult for Russians to handle this situation. Russians prefer to use global categories in political reasoning, trying to cultivate the image of Russia as great historical figure. That is why it is and will seriously affect the entire character of Russian way of building relations with its partners and allies. The correct perception of this phenomenon could help Europeans and Americans to understand the nature of Russian political behavior. However, the contemporary situation, which includes common threats and challenges, creates very good conditions and opportunities for rapprochement between Russia and the West. This rapprochement will most likely be based on pragmatic ground of shared interests, balanced concerns and understanding.

⁷¹ Pavel Rahshmir ‘Transatlanticheskie Kollizii i Rossiya’ [Transatlantic Collisions and Russia], *Novaia i Noveishaiia Istoriia*, no. 3, June 2005. P. 83.

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